

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 INRE-00 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 CCO-00 ONY-00 /023 W

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O 191736Z SEP 76 ZFF-4

FM USDEL SECRETARY IN PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SECTO 27189

INR ONLY FOR KIRK AND THORNE FROM SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, RH

SUBJ: COMMENTS ON DRAFT NIE ON RHODESIA

1. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE STATE OF PLAY IS IN WASHINGTON ON THE RHODESIA NIE. ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT MAY BE IN A HOLDING PATTERN AWAITING THE OUTCOME OF THE PRESENT TRIP, I HAVE SPENT SOME TIME THINKING ABOUT WHAT KIND OF ESTIMATE MIGHT BE USEFUL REGARDLESS OF PRECISELY HOW THE PRESENT TALKS TURN OUT OR EXACTLY HOW ANY NEGOTIATIONS MAY PROCEED. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE ART IN THIS CASE IS TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO CENTRAL QUESTIONS WHICH WILL BE USEFUL AS YARDSTICKS FOR MEASURING PROGRESS HOWEVER EVENTS DEVELOP. THE KEY IS TO IDENTIFY THE BASIC QUESTIONS. RECOGNIZING THAT MUCH OF WHAT I SUGGEST IS ALREADY IN THE FIRST DRAFT-- ALTHOUGH SOME IS NOT-- I AM PROVIDING THE THOUGHTS BELOW FOR WHATEVER THEY MAY BE WORTH.

2. IN MY VIEW, THE PRESENT DRAFT CONTAINS A LOT OF USEFUL MATERIAL, BUT IT ADDRESSES THE WRONG QUESTIONS. AS I READ THE DRAFT, IT ADDRESSES THE QUESTIONS: IS A POLITICAL RESOLUTION POSSIBLE? IF SO, HOW MIGHT IT COME ABOUT? IF NOT, HOW WILL EVENTS EVOLVE THEN? THE PROBLEM WITH THESE QUESTIONS IS THAT ANSWERS WILL NOT BE VERY USEFUL IF SOME SORT OF POLITICAL PROCESS IS N TRAIN. THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN USEFUL IF SOMEONE HAD ASKED SOME MONTHS BACK WHETHER IT WAS WORTH TRYING TO START A POLITICAL PROCESS. BUT THAT IS NO

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LONGER THE ISSUE, AND THE PRESENT DRAFT-- LIKE THE

CLASSICAL MILITARY PLANNER--IS STILL "FIGHTING THE LAST WAR".

3. WHAT WE NEED NOW, IT SEEMS TO ME, IS AN ESTIMATE WHICH WILL ADDRESS THESE CENTRAL QUESTIONS: HOW WILL VARIOUS CONDITIONS AFFECT THE DETERMINATION OF THE PARTIES TO A POLITICAL PROCESS TO MAKE IT SUCCEED OR TO STALL IT? WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF VARIOUS GENERAL LINES TOWARD A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION; ARE THEY REALISTIC, OR WILL THEY COLLAPSE SOON AFTER AN AGREEMENT, IF ANY, IS SIGNED? WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES IF EFFORTS AT A POLITICAL SOLUTION FAILS? SOMETHING LIKE THIS, I THINK, SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AS THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ESTIMATE.

4. WITH THAT APPROACH IN MIND, I WOULD SUGGEST REORGANIZING AT LEAST THE KEY POINTS AND ADDING TO THE BASIC PAPER AND REORGANIZING AS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

A. WHAT IS THE ABILITY OF THE WHITE REGIME IN RHODESIA TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT SITUATION AGAINST INCREASED GUERRILLA PRESSURE AND PRESSURE ON ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPLY LINES? THE PRESENT DRAFT DOES ITS BEST JOB ON THIS QUESTION. THE SPECIFIC POINTS THAT SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN A REVISION ARE: WHAT PRESSURES WILL BE MOST TELLING IN THE COURSE OF A POSSIBLE NEGOTIATION? SINCE ONE OF THOSE PRESSURES IS RECOGNIZING THE CONSEQUENCES IF NEGOTIATIONS FAIL, HOW WILL EVENTS EVOLVE IF THE POLITICAL PROCESS BREAKS DOWN?

B. HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT THE PRESSURES THAT MIGHT AFFECT WILLINGNESS OF THE WHITE REGIME TO REACH AGREEMENT WILL BE TELLINGLY APPLIED? THE MATERIAL ALREADY IN THE MIDDLE SECTIONS OF THE DRAFT COULD BE REGROUPED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING SUB-QUESTIONS:

--WHAT FACTORS WILL AFFECT THE CAPABILITY OF THE RHODESIAN INSURGENTS TO INCREASE PRESSURE
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EFFECTIVELY AND OF THE SECURITY FORCES TO CONTROL IT?

--WHAT FACTORS WILL AFFECT THE APPLICATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRESSURES?

--WHAT FACTORS WILL AFFECT THE WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY OF THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS TO APPLY PRESSURE TO THE VARIOUS INSURGENTS IN FAVOR

OF A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION?

--IN SUM, ARE THE PRESSURES SUCH AS TO PRODUCE A
NEGOTIATED SOLUTION? (THIS COULD BE AN
INTERESTING FEW PARAGRAPHS ON HOW EACH PARTY
WEIGHS THE CONSEQUENCES FOR IT OF A
NEGOTIATED SOLUTION SOON VERSUS LETTING THE
FIGHTING CONTINUE FOR AWHILE?)

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INFO OCT-01 INRE-00 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 CCO-00 ONY-00 /023 W

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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C. AND NOW TO THE QUESTION NOT ADDRESSED IN THE PRESENT
DRAFT: WHAT FACTORS AFFECT THE ABILITY OF THE MOST
LIKELY POLITICAL COMBINATIONS TO GOVERN RHODESIA?
CONCRETELY: IF NEGOTIATIONS GET STARTED AND ARE
PROCEEDING, WHAT BLACK LEADER OR COMBINATION, IF ANY,
WILL BE MOST LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO PUT AN AGREEMENT INTO
EFFECT? AN ATTEMPT AT ANSWERING THIS QUESTION
COULD HELP ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A POSSIBLE
AGREEMENT IS WORTH GOING THROUGH WITH OR WHETHER IT
HAS VERY LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION. SOME
OF THE SUB-QUESTIONS THAT MIGHT BE DEALT WITH INCLUDE:
--ON WHAT IS THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S POWER BASED?
HOW IS AUTHORITY EXERCISED AMONG THE AFRICANS?
--WHAT ELEMENTS OF COHESION AND FRAGMENTATION
WOULD A BLACK GOVERNMENT HAVE TO DEAL WITH?
--WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF EACH OF THE MOST
LIKELY INDIVIDUALS AND PARTIES WHICH MIGHT FORM THE
MAIN ELEMENTS OF A BLACK GOVERNMENT? TO WHAT
OUTSIDE INFLUENCES, AFRICAN AND NON-AFRICAN, WOULD
THEY BE MOST RESPONSIVE?

D. HOW WOULD DIFFERENT OUTCOMES AFFECT THE OPPOR-

TUNITIES OF THE USSR, PRC, AND FORCES SUPPORTED BY
EITHER OF THEM TO BE INFLUENTIAL IN RHODESIA AND
THE NEIGHBORING STATES?

5. IN SHORT, I THINK SOMETHING LIKE THE ABOVE
APPROACH WOULD BE USEFUL WHETHER OR NOT A CLEARLY
DEFINED POLITICAL PROCESS COMES OUT OF THIS TRIP.

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IT WOULD PROVIDE USEFUL ANSWERS HOWEVER THE SITUATION
DEVELOPS. THE PRESENT DRAFT OF THE BASIC PAPER
IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF WHAT I SEE AS THE PROBLEM
CREATED WHEN A PAPER SETS OUT MAINLY TO DESCRIBE THE
ELEMENTS IN A SITUATION AND HOW THEY INTERACT RATHER
THAN ANALYZING THAT MATERIAL IN THE LIGHT OF THE
PRECISE QUESTIONS THE POLICY-MAKER NEEDS ANSWERED.
THE PROBLEM, AS WE ALL KNOW, IS THAT THIS DRAFT WAS
WRITTEN AT A TIME WHEN IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DEFINE
THOSE QUESTIONS. NOW, HOWEVER, WE HAVE A FIRST DRAFT
THAT MARSHALS THE DATA WE NEED. I WOULD STRONGLY
URGE THAT WE REORGANIZE IT SOMEWHAT TO
DIRECT IT AT ANSWERING THE MOST PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

6. I HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOUR SHARING THIS TELEGRAM
WITH BILL CHRISTIANSEN OR ANYONE ELSE CENTRALLY
INVOLVED IN PRODUCING THIS ESTIMATE.

7. ON THE BASIS OF SOME DISCUSSIONS HERE, I ALSO
WANT TO PASS ON SOME POINTS YOU MIGHT WANT TO
DEVELOP MORE PRECISELY WHERE POSSIBLE, RECOGNIZING
THAT OUR INFORMATION MAY BE SCANTY:

A. BE AS PRECISE AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE SOVIET AND
PRC ROLES. DISTINGUISH WHEREVER POSSIBLE BETWEEN
ADVISORY AND TRAINING ROLES.

B. SAY AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT THE LIKELY COURSE OF
COMBAT: THE INTENSITY OF FIGHTING, TRENDS IN KILL
RATIOS, ETC.

C. ON THE RHODESIAN HELICOPTERS, WHAT ABOUT MAINTENANCE
AND SPARE PARTS?

D. SOUTH AFRICAN TRAINING OF RHODESIANS.

E. SOUTH AFRICAN NON-OFFICIAL AID AND THE ATTITUDES
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY.

F. WHAT ABOUT HELP FOR INSURGENTS FROM OTHER COMMUNIST

NATIONS LIKE EAST GERMANY AND ROMANIA?

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECTO, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SECTO27189
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760354-0703
From: SECRETARY PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760944/aaaablqt.tel
Line Count: 231
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUL 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <18 OCT 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENTS ON DRAFT NIE ON RHODESIA
TAGS: PINR, RH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006